

Committee of Practitioners Meeting
November 9, 2011, 5th fl conference room, AJT
9:00-10:30am

Present in the room: Debra Owens, Nan McKerley, Liz Roper, Anita Raulston, Paula Gaddis, Debbie Williams, James Francis, Sister Sandra Smithson, JoAnne Jawerski, and Dominique Baillet. See the attached chat and attendance sheet for the out of room participants.

Present on the phone: Art Fuller, Charles Scott, Darrell Wooden, Dr. Teri Anderson, Dr. Therese S. Williams, Georgeanne Oxnam, Gracie Porter, Joseph Murphy, Karen Davis, Kim Fox, Larry Mathis, Marjorie Douglas, Roger Jones, Sandra Morris, Tabatha Siddiqi, and Vesia Hawkins

Introduction/Instructions

Waiver background: Commissioner Huffman had concerns about No Child Left Behind Act 2001, (NCLB) when he assumed his post. The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) knew that many of the districts would fail Adequate Yearly Process (AYP). He discovered that the AYP targets were unrealistic and we needed to create an achievement and realistic accountability system. We needed to move the targets up. Commissioner Huffman and Governor Haslam requested a waiver for ESEA/NCLB in July 2011. The United States Department of Education (USED) responded that they were working on a waiver packet. This USED packet was released on Sept 23, 2011. There is an overlap between the original waiver (7 pages) and the wavier packet (over 100 pages) in principle but the waiver packet requests great specificity.

This waiver is based on 4 principles that are required by the USED. Some of these requirements are part of our Race to the Top application. A powerpoint explained the main portions of the waiver.

Principle 1: College and Career expectations for all students. Tennessee (TN) modified its standards through the TN Diploma Project with Achieve. TDOE has committed to implement the common core standards.

Principle 2: State Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support. We recognized the need for accountability changes and this is the focus of the meeting/webinar.

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Principle 4: Ways to reduce paperwork requirements and other duplications that can be reduced.

Any questions-please enter into chat pod

There will be a peer review of our plans. The process for the waiver approval is:

- a. The state submits the waiver
- b. Peer review team provides feedback and USEd discusses necessary changes.
- c. Approval by Secretary Duncan

Principle 2: We have proposed a different system of accountability and recognition.

We need to recognize the top 10%-5% of the highest performance and top 5% of schools with the most progress. These are the reward schools.

Priority Schools-Bottom 5% in proficiency and grad rate. Some are eligible for the ASD

Focus Schools-10% (not Priority Schools) have the largest achievement gap in areas such as: Economic disadvantaged/Non-Economic disadvantaged. There will be a variety of interventions in how the school can narrow the achievement gap. LEAs will have the chance to submit a competitive application for grant money.

TN is setting Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). The new targets need to be realistic. These targets will be based on our First to the Top application.

Some of our targets in the measurable areas are already approved by the state board and some more will be offered for approval. To find out how the whole school is doing, we needed to have an aggregate group as a measure. That is why we are asking for a grade 3-8 aggregate in math and reading/language.

The achievement gap reduction in each measure: 3-8 aggregate Math and reading/language, EOC algebra 1, EOC English II is included in the application.

Debbie Owens went over the AMO interventions chart slide and the New Accountability Overview slide.

On the Accountability Overview slide: We have familiar areas and new areas. The State accountability 1 is similar to the NCLB requirements. On state accountability 2-the interventions will be looked at after 3 years to see if the achievement gap has narrowed or widened.

Debbie showed and went over the timeline for submitting the waiver:

TDOE will run one list in the summer of 2011 to get the newest data for priority/focus schools. We will run another list in the Spring of 2012 and make any changes/additions. After this, the list will be done annually for Reward schools and AMOs but will only change every 3 years.

Participants comments/questions. Also see attached chat

Has the application been submitted? No, still taking feedback. Will be submitted 11/14. Is it posted? Yes, on our website. Draft was sent out yesterday to the committee. Will the final be sent out? The final application will be sent to the federal programs directors and posted on our website. Is the ppt available? It was sent out this morning.

N group 45 to 30? Yes. The concerns were that the larger N group was masking subgroup results at some schools. The N of 30 is still statistically sound.

Does the n count work against Title I schools?-no

What effect will reauthorization have on the waiver? The waiver will go away unless the law states that the accountability plans can be grandfathered in. The waiver will be good until ESEA is reauthorized. Most of the changes that might occur in the reauthorization are already contained in the waiver. The waiver could be like a field test? Yes. Depends on who is in the congress. Congress will determine if states can use their accountability systems or if they have to implement a new system.

Priority schools have science included in aggregate? The feeling is that in priority schools, the most robust view of a school was needed since a school can be placed in the ASD.

One committee member stated that there were two problems- Some American kids need to be socialized and taught standard English to be able to improve and learn. Their language skills are so low. You need to go up one step at a time, not step 1 to step 8. She suggested we remove K-2 from accountability. Instead we need to work hard on socializing and improving language (new culture-projects to schools-need to realize that they need to feel like they can succeed at school or will be turned off). Kids know street English but not standard English. In K-2, need to concentrate on simple things-like socializing and language. They need to learn the fundamentals in Math and Reading/Language before they can learn subject matter. K-2 should be a prep school for regular school. Continuing to load the K-2 curriculum is bad.

A committee member asked that the state encourage districts to take another look at the Tennessee Vocabulary Project. UTK has beefed it up. More robust training for the early grades. Language is a huge concern for students living in poverty. A growing concern is that more language exposure and vocabulary is needed at the lower grades.

There were various other questions clarifying information in the waiver but no additional comments on how the waiver should be modified. The committee was again told that any suggestions can be sent to Dominique Baillet.